



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS

**The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of
Homeland Security and Emergency Management**
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FEMA Region I Administrator Donald R. Boyce (l) meets with HSEM Assistant Director Kathy Douth and Director Chris Pope during a courtesy call in December. It was Boyce's first visit to New Hampshire as Region I director. He was appointed to the position by President Obama in June. Boyce is the former director of the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency.

NOR'EASTER DELIVERS BIGGER PUNCH THAN EXPECTED – Forecasters predicted a major winter storm for New England and much of the Northeast starting late on Jan. 11. Snowfalls around the state were expected to be six inches to a foot, but some places got twice that. Concord got 22 inches, Deerfield, 20, Goffstown, nearly 20; Manchester, Henniker and Salem, 18 inches. The state Emergency Operations Center was already activated at a Level 3 for the second day of a Vermont Yankee exercise, so some HSEM staff were designated to keep an eye on the weather. Despite the heavy snowfall and winds gusting up to 30 mph in parts of the state, New Hampshire had no significant problems during the storm. Most schools were closed and many drivers heeded warnings to stay off the road. A number of minor motor vehicle crashes and some scattered power outages were the only reported problems.

The Vermont Yankee exercise was the first of a series leading up to a graded exercise on May 4 and 5. This is an ingestion pathway sequence that will last two days and consider recovery issues for a 50-mile radius.

FIRST WINTER STORM IS A BLIZZARD – Most of New Hampshire missed out on a white Christmas, but Mother Nature more than made up for that with a blizzard that roared up the East Coast Dec. 26-27. The storm caused havoc with air and rail transportation in the Washington-Boston corridor and coastal flood damage in Massachusetts, but New Hampshire got off without significant problems. HSEM personnel began monitoring the storm several days before Christmas and the state Emergency Operations Center was activated on Dec. 26. Electric utilities reported about 5,000 customers out of power at the peak of the storm. The outages were scattered around the state, mainly caused by trees and limbs felled by winds of more than 50 mph. A number of minor motor vehicle crashes were reported, but most drivers stayed off the roads because of the weather or an extended Christmas holiday. The EOC was demobilized at 3 p.m. on Dec. 27.

The wild weather has continued through January. A frigid snap Jan. 22-24 produced overnight lows between -10 and -30 in the Granite State. The cold weather did not cause major public safety issues.

PUBLIC SAFETY FACING NARROW BAND DEADLINE IN 2 YEARS – Public safety agencies are facing a Jan. 1, 2013, deadline to comply with new narrow band standards for their radio systems established by the Federal Communications Commission. The new standards cut the bandwidth of radio transmissions in half, from 25 Kilohertz to 12.5, doubling the number of stations that can use the public safety spectrum. The narrow band regulations affect stations on VHF high band (150-174 Megahertz) and UHF (421-512 Megahertz). Voice and tone alerting pagers are not affected under this mandate but should be part of agencies' budgets and compliance plans. Low band VHF stations (30-50 Megahertz) are also unaffected. The deadline should not come as a surprise to licensees of public safety radio systems. The FCC narrow band initiative began in 1992.

TRITIUM DETECTED IN VY WELL – Technicians at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant have detected tritium in a monitoring well where the radioactive substance had previously not been found. The amount of tritium is very low, 9,200 picocuries per liter, which is well below the level required for reporting to federal regulators. The well is located about 150 feet north of the area of the tritium leak first detected one year ago. The plant maintains 32 wells to monitor for tritium and other radioactive materials in groundwater. Thus far, the plant has extracted 314,300 gallons of water for above-ground storage, offsite transport and processing. Drinking water supplies in the area have not been affected.

DISASTER PLANNING HELP FOR CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS –

Emergency managers are used to planning to protect people and critical infrastructure in their communities. But disasters also place cultural institutions in danger, threatening irreplaceable buildings, books and works of art. The N.H. Department of Cultural Resources has developed a web-based emergency planning resource for cultural organizations at www.nh.gov/nhculture/disaster_planning.htm. Commissioner Van McLeod encouraged all cultural organizations, no matter how small, to use the site develop effective plans to deal with natural and manmade disasters.

MEMORIAL BRIDGE REOPENS AFTER 9 DAYS – Memorial Bridge, the 90-year-old span that carries Route 1 between Portsmouth and Kittery, Maine, reopened on Dec. 18 following emergency repairs. The bridge was closed abruptly on Dec. 9 following an inspection that detected significant structural deterioration. At the time, officials said the bridge would be closed indefinitely. That prompted HSEM to issue a compensatory evacuation plan for New Castle and some Portsmouth residents for Seabrook Station. But Transportation Commissioner George Campbell said dry weather and hard work by DOT crews permitted reopening of the bridge with a three-ton weight limit after only nine days. The compensatory evacuation plan was discontinued when the bridge reopened. Plans are being developed by New Hampshire and Maine for a permanent replacement for the bridge.

SBA LOANS AVAILABLE FOR STORM DAMAGE RECOVERY – The U.S. Small Business Administration will make low interest loans to small businesses and non-profit organizations in New Hampshire that suffered damage from severe storms and flooding between Feb. 26 and March 14, 2010. The deadline for applying for the Economic Injury Disaster Loans is Feb. 4. In addition, SBA loans are available for eligible non-profit organizations in Hillsborough and Rockingham counties that suffered damage from severe storms and flooding between Feb. 26 and March 14, 2010. The deadline for those applications is Feb. 14.

The maximum loan amount for both events is \$2 million. These working capital loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that could have been paid had the disaster not occurred. They are not intended to replace lost sales or profits. The interest rates on these loans are 3 percent for non-profit organizations and 4 percent for businesses, with a maximum term of 30 years.

To obtain disaster loan information and application forms, call the SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 (800-877-8339 for people with speech or hearing disabilities) Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, or send an e-mail to disastercustomerservice@sba.gov. Business disaster loan applications can also be downloaded from www.sba.gov.

Keep up with emergency preparedness information in New Hampshire on www.nh.gov/readynh and [Twitter.com/ReadyNH](https://twitter.com/ReadyNH).